

Tennessee Central R.R.

Passenger Train Schedule at Cookeville

WEST BOUND	EAST BOUND
No. 1 3:10 p.m.	No. 2 12:13 p.m.
No. 3 2:54 a.m.	No. 4 12:56 a.m.
No. 5 6:43 a.m.	No. 6 7:20 p.m.

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Christmas Legends

ALL around the season of the Coming of Love as a little Child there have sprung legends and beliefs, like blossoms in a gracious clime, which testify with subtlety to the depth of the appeal of the birth of Christ. Here divinely spiritual symbolism and there sweet human tenderness and pathos appear, and, blended, they evidence the world's belief that this was both Son of Man and Son of God.

An Irish legend tells that, on Christmas eve, the Christ-Child wanders out in the darkness and cold, and the peasants still put lighted candles in their windows to guide the sacred little feet, that they may not stumble on their way to their homes. And in Hungary the people go yet further in their tenderness for the Child, they spread feasts and leave their doors open that He may enter at His will, while throughout Christendom there is a belief that no evil can touch any child who is born on Christmas eve.

The legend which tells how the very hay which lined the manger in which the Holy Babe was laid put forth living red blossoms at midwinter at the touch of the Babe's body could only have arisen from belief in the renewal of life through the Lord of Life.

The Holy Thorn.

IT is not so many centuries ago since there was that holy thorn at Glastonbury which blossomed every Christmas, and, so ran the legend, had done ever since St. Joseph of Arimathea, having come as apostle to Britain, and, landing at Glastonbury, had stuck his staff of dry hawthorn into the soil, commanding it to put forth leaves and blossoms. This the staff straightway did, and thereby was the king converted to the Christian faith, the faith which preached life from death.

The holy thorn of Glastonbury flourished during the centuries until the civil wars. During those it was uprooted; but several persons had had trees growing from cuttings from the original tree, and those continued to bloom at the Christ-season, just as their parent, which had grown from St. Joseph's staff, had bloomed. And about the middle of the 18th century it was recorded in the Gentleman's Magazine how the famous holy thorn would not deign to recognize the new style calendar, which had then come into force but would persist in blossoming as of old on old Christmas day!

In those days the anniversary of the advent of the Babe had certainly meant more to the common people than merely a time for feasting and revelry, for giving and receiving; it had been also a season for holy observances, for they refused to go to church on New Christmas day, the holy thorn not being then in blossom. So serious became the trouble that the clergy found it prudent to announce that Old Christmas day should also be kept sacred as before. Only another story of men's weak, superstitious minds? True, perhaps; but they are better who evidence some spiritual weakness than those who wallow in the wholly material, and when we cease to be careful of the cup and the platter, we become not over careful of their contents.

The Christmas Rose.

NOTHER of those spiritual parables is the legend of the Christmas rose, and it tells how good things, fit for giving, spring up ready to the hand which earnestly desires to give to the Child.

It is said that a certain maiden of Bethlehem was so poor that she had nothing to give to the Babe to whom kings brought wealth from afar, and, as she stood, longing and mourning, and angel appeared to her, saying: "Look at thy feet, beneath the snow," and lo! on obeying the maiden found that a new flower had miraculously sprung up and blossomed at her needs. Every since then, runs this story, this exquisite flower, with its snowy petals just touched by suggestions of pinkish bloom, is to be found at this season; and, indeed, its half-opened cups are like chalices of love, and its fully-spread petals are like a happy innocence, fit symbols for the gifts for the Babe of spotless innocence, whose heart was the vessel of love.

Christmas Eve Legends.

HERE are several exceedingly touching legends concerning bells, which are heard ringing from buried cities and villages at this season. One belongs to a village near Raleigh, in Nottinghamshire, and the story runs that once, where there is now but a valley, there was a village which, with every trace of life and habitation, had been swallowed by an earthquake; but ever since, at Christmas, the bells of the buried church are heard to ring as of old.

A similar legend is told of Preston, in Lancashire, and yet another and more moving one comes from the Netherlands. It is said that the city of Beem was notorious for its black and shameless sins, as well as renowned for its beauty and magnificence. To the Sodom of the middle ages came our Savior on one anniversary of his birth, and went as a beggar from door to door, but not one in all that Christmas keeping city gave the Master of the abundance. Sin he saw rampant on every side, but not a trace of Christmas bounty and good will, and he called to the sea, which, as of old, obeyed his voice, and Beem, the city of sin, was buried deep, clean out of sight, beneath the waves. But ever at Christmas up from beneath the covering waters comes the sweet calling of church bells buried in Beem. It is a legend which appears to tell in parable that nothing which ever belonged to the Christ, and was dedicated to his service, is ever wholly lost from him and alienated from service; that ever and again something of their inherent beauty and compelling sweetness rises from the depths through all seeming ruin.

The Manger.

TRADITION declares that within the stone manger there was another one of wood, and that the stone cradle in the Chapel of the Nativity is, indeed, the outer manger. Splendid is that humble stone trough now with white marble, softly rich with costly draperies, and radiant with a silver star, which is surrounded by 16 lamps, ever alit. But yet more glorious is the wooden manger at Rome, held to be the veritable manger in which the Christ-child lay. It was removed to Rome in the seventh century, during the Mohammedan invasion of the Holy Land, and there it is preserved in a strong brazen chest, from which it is brought forth on Christmas days, when it is placed on the Grand Altar. It is mounted upon a stand of silver, which is inlaid with gold and gems, and the shrine in which it rests is of purest rock crystal. In the days in which this was accomplished men, whatsoever may have been their shortcomings in other directions, gave magnificently to the Church Visible.

Christmas Bells.

TRADITION says that the hour of the Babe's birth was the hour of midnight, and legend adds that from then until dawn cocks crow. In Ireland it is

held that whoso looks into a mirror on this eve will see the devil or Judas Iscariot looking over his shoulder, surely thought sufficient to drive the hardest soul to a thought of the innocent Babe.

Another legend tells that, on Christmas eve, Judas Iscariot is released from that hell—"his own place"—and is allowed to return to earth, that he may cool himself in icy waters.

Wild and improbable although such and such legends appear on their faces, they bear study and repay it, for we then see that they are full of subtle spiritual expression, as it were; that they are parables of certain spiritual facts, and it will be ill for us should the Christmas day ever dawn on which such flowers of tender faith and wonder shall appear to us no more than dry curious specimens from the dead roots of superstition.

What Christmas Means.



Christmas means hope and its realization. The child grows eagerly expectant as the time approaches for the visit of Santa Claus. While this fiction remains unquestioned, the imagination opens new and wider worlds, and ideals become so much a part of the mind that the prosaic and commonplace can never crush them. Until the youth reaches manhood and independence, Christmas is the happiest day of the year. Its gifts and hearty good cheer impress family affection, parental thoughtfulness and brotherly love. The duldest and most irresponsible of fathers and mothers are uplifted to a vision of higher life by the interchanges of souvenirs and the merry meeting with children and grandchildren at the table and fire-side. Few can escape and all enjoy the meaning of the festival, the lessons it conveys and the inspiration it gives, and we enter upon a brighter future and a fuller appreciation of the beneficence of the practice of faith, hope and charity. The loved ones who have crossed to the other side, the loved near and far who are still with us, the old homestead with its precious memories, the old church whose sacred associations tie together childhood, maturity and age, love, marriage and death; the schoolhouse where the beginnings of education were so painful, and the ever-increasing pleasures of the pursuit of learning through the high school, academy and college are recalled and recited, and there is exquisite delight in these oft-told tales, and new experiences enliven this blessed anniversary.—Leslie's Weekly.

First Christmas Observance.



Christmas gets its name from the mass celebrated in the early days of the Christian church in honor of the birth of Christ, its first solemnization having been ordered by Pope Telesphorus. This was in or before the year 138, for in that year Pope Telesphorus died.

At first Christmas was what is known as a movable feast, just as Easter is now, and owing to misunderstandings was celebrated as late as April or May. In the fourth century an ecclesiastical investigation was ordered, and upon the authority of the tables of the censors in the Roman archives December 25 was agreed upon as the date of the Savior's nativity. Tradition fixed the hour of birth at about midnight, and this led to the celebration of a midnight mass in all the churches, a second at dawn and a third in the later morning.

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